[TFR 229-1]

Report

on a conversation with A.V. Rybakov (pilot of the MiG-17 aircraft
which shot down an American B-29 aircraft on 29 July 1953
near Askol'd Island)

The conversation took place at Rybakov's home in the presence of his wife (city of Vladivostok, October 1993).

Rybakov at first reacted negatively to our request to speak about the events associated with the intercept of an American B-29 aircraft on 29 July 1953. Rybakov's wife categorically opposed her husband meeting with U.S. representatives. At my request, after presenting documents and discussing the goals being pursued by the Commission, Rybakov agreed to recount those events.

His story contained the following information:

On 29 July 1953, he and his wingman Yablonevskij were in the duty flight of the fighter aviation regiment based at Nikolaevka airfield. Early in the morning (in his words, it was still around dawn), he and his wingman were scrambled. In the air, he was given a target designation - an unidentified aircraft was detected 130 miles to the south of Cape Gamov following a course toward USSR territorial waters. From this point on, the flight was under ground controlled intercept. Upon approach to the coastline, visual observation of the ground became impossible: the coast and the ocean were covered in dense fog. The flight occurred at an altitude of 6 to 7 thousand meters between two layers of thick cloud cover (the upper level of the lower layer of clouds was 6 to 7 thousand meters, the lower level of the upper layer was 8 to 9 thousand meters). After approximately 30 minutes of flight, I visually detected a large, four-engine aircraft with U.S. Air Force markings. I classified it as a B-29 type U.S. military bomber. I reported this to ground and, having confirmed by instrument readings that the violator was over USSR territorial waters, I began to close on it with the aim of indicating that it had violated USSR air space and must leave. As I completed the maneuver, I felt two powerful strikes to the fuselage and wing of my aircraft. My cabin depressurized. It became difficult to control the plane.

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My wingman reported that the violator aircraft was firing. In answer, I fired two cannon bursts at the violator aircraft from close range. My wingman also fired on my command. Immediately after this, the violator aircraft sharply banked onto one wing and descended and disappeared into the thick cloud cover. Neither I, nor my wingman saw any parachutes, though we only observed the fall of the aircraft for several seconds.

I did not have the opportunity to fly over the violator aircraft crash site; I was barely able to control my aircraft. My wingman and I set a course by the most direct route - a straight line - for our airfield, where 25 minutes later I made an emergency landing (it later became clear that a round had pierced the hydraulic control line in my aircraft and my wing mechanism did not function).

Immediately after landing and afterwards in division headquarters, I gave a detailed account of this incident. Those accounts contained roughly the same information that today's account contains.

In answer to the additional question of whether or not he heard anything from his colleagues or from anyone else in Vladivostok about the fate of the crew of the aircraft that he shot down, Rybakov said, "I did not hear that pilots or aircraft parts from the plane that I shot down were raised from the water, and overall, for the entire period of my service in Vladivostok (1950 - 1961), I did not hear any talk or any specific facts on this incident."

Commission Executive Secretary

Lieutenant Colonel [signature]

S. Osipov